

OJCS 1958-75

14 AUG 1975

DA QA/QC:  
03/05/01. SY

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Schedule for ORACLE Management Review Meeting

1. On 13 August I called Mr. Ragosine (Ampex) and agreed to the Ampex-proposed postponement of the next-scheduled ORACLE management review meeting. The meeting is now rescheduled from 26 August 1975 to 11 September 1975.

2. I advised Mr. Ragosine that Mr. McMahon, A/DDA, planned to attend the 26 August meeting but would be unable to attend the 11 September meeting. I told Mr. Ragosine that we would like to plan a visit to Ampex by Mr. McMahon for 26 August to meet the contractor team and be briefed on the concept of the ORACLE system, the status of the project and the Ampex management approach. Mr. Ragosine said he would be delighted to meet Mr. McMahon and was looking forward to his visit. He asked if anyone else would accompany Mr. McMahon. I said that either Mr. Fitzwater or I would accompany him most likely, and I would confirm this when Mr. Fitzwater returns from leave.

STATINTL

  
Deputy Director of Joint Computer Support

STATINTL: McMahon

STATINTL Fitzwater

OJCS 1810-75  
8 AUG 1975

Mr. Victor Ragosine  
Vice President-General Manager  
Advanced Technology Division  
Ampex Corporation  
401 Broadway  
Redwood City, California 94063

Dear Victor:

I was surprised to learn of the changes in your software management staff. Frankly, we believe that in the long run this change will benefit the project. As mentioned during our telephone conversation on 1 August, there are some problems associated with the software development that continue to cause me concern. Mainly, they result from a lack of continuity and consistency in software reports provided to the Agency and the apparent reluctance to provide an overall system design. The software reports appeared to be tailored solely to appease the Agency and in many cases bore little resemblance to the software status portrayed on Ampex office charts. Specifically, we received a document dated 3 July 1975 that indicated several functions were complete, while the software wall charts provided to us indicated that these functions required substantial work in the future. Other such discrepancies, noted in the past, have contributed to our lack of confidence in the software reports.

We certainly share your desire that project status reporting not impact software development. To reach an acceptable medium in status reporting versus the software development effort requires that the customer have confidence in the reporting mechanism and the personnel preparing the reports. I unreservedly admit that we had neither confidence in the software management nor the reporting of the software development. Also contributing to our lack of confidence in the software development was the absence of an overall system design. Regardless of the detail in the agreed specifications, we believe that it is impossible to confirm the progress of development or uncover potential design and schedule pitfalls if a total system design does not exist. The apparent method of assembling the TMS-2 software in modules that are designed, coded, and integrated with previously coded modules, without a total system design, appears to be questionable; particularly when no one individual could be identified who was tying the total package together. It was doubtful that the software manager could fill that role since he was also managing other

TMS contracts. Furthermore, a review of Mr. Miner's workload indicates that he could not provide that type of overview. The work plans provided to us show Mr. Miner carrying a heavy design and coding workload that permitted very little time for management. For example, the plan indicates that he will spend three weeks designing the "recovery system." A detailed analysis of that job reveals that it would be difficult to write the programming specifications in the period allotted.

Contributing to our pessimism was the report that six new programmers would be added to the project while four experienced personnel would be shifted to other programs. This shift of experienced personnel is certain to perturbate the software development, particularly since a total system design does not exist for new people to study before they start coding.

Since our commitments toward financing the TMS-2 development have been met contractually by capping the cost of the contract, an overrun is not one of my major concerns. However, I am apprehensive about the anticipated quality of the delivered product and have strong reservations as to whether the proposed schedule can be met. Most of the recovery functions that are critical to an acceptable system are not scheduled for completion until February or later. The functions of security monitoring and maintenance are not scheduled for completion until February or later. The functions of security monitoring and maintenance are not scheduled for completion until March or later. The schedule appears to assume that the system can be thoroughly and successfully tested prior to final Acceptance Testing in May. This highly optimistic schedule would require a marked improvement in the software development.

We are optimistic that strong management in the software development could do much to improve conditions and lead to a better chance for meeting the current projected schedule. This is very important to us since another slip in schedule would severely impact the overall computer system plan for the Agency. As you may know, we were forced to make major adjustments in our system plan because of the last schedule slip of one year. Another delay in delivery would be untenable.

Again, I believe that you have made the proper move in acquiring new management for the software development. If there is anything more we can do to assist you in this area, please let me know. I apologize for the detail and length of this letter but consider it necessary to pass along our views

on these matters because of their major impact on the outcome of this project. We are hopeful that the current attention being given to these problems by Ampex management will result in a successful system delivered on schedule.

Sincerely,



Harry E. Fitzwater  
Director of Joint Computer Support

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STATINTL

O/D/OJCS/HFitzwater:ee 8-7-75

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Victor Ragosine  
Victor,

I was preparing to sign the attached letter when your TMS-2/049 dated 31 July 1975 was received. Although agreeing the reporting system you propose will work, I decided to forward my letter since it contains some concerns that you may wish to address with your Staff.

  
8/8/75  
(DATE)

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FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101  
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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